

**DRAFT MINUTES FOR December 6, 2012, MEETING of the
PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE, and TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Executive Office Building, 9th Floor Conference Room**

Members Present: Erwin Mack, Chair; Ramin Assa; Lt. Robert McCullagh (representing Capt. Didone); Darrell Droblich; Benjamin Fulton (representing Valerie Ervin); Angel Garcia-Ablanque, MCPS; Colleen Mitchell; Alyce Ortuzar; Reemberto Rodriguez; Tom Pogue (representing Arthur Holmes, Jr.); Alan Migdall; David Sharp

Members Absent: David Anspacher, MNCPPC; John Hall, City of Rockville; Steve Friedman; Arthur Holmes, Jr., MCDOT; Cpt. Tom Didone, MCPD; Councilmember Valerie Ervin; Jack Strausman

County Staff: Jeff Dunckel, Pedestrian Safety Coordinator; Michael Subin, County Executive's Office; Fred Lees, TEOS/MCDOT; Margaret Boumel, MCDOT

Guests: Joseph Butler, Takoma Park Police Department; Larry Evans, SDA Church; Doug Murray, Prince Georges County Police Department

Chairman Erwin Mack called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. PBTSAC Committee Business:

Chairman Mack stated that before the November meeting minutes could be approved there were a couple of issues that needed to be addressed and additional information provided.

In the November meeting minutes (Page 1 of the draft minutes provided,) clarification of the third paragraph beginning with Angel Garcia-Ablanque's question was requested. There was not enough information given and it was not clear who made the statement answering Angel Garcia-Ablanque's question: ***"If a driver has a green light and the pedestrian crossed in the crosswalk, does the driver have to stop? Who has the right-of-way?" The answer "the driver has the right-of-way, and the pedestrian is at fault,"*** was questioned since more was not known about the circumstances.

Mike Subin submitted the question to the County Attorney who said that while the car, not the pedestrian has the right-of-way, it is the driver that has to take the last clear chance to avoid hitting a pedestrian.

Chairman Mack stated that the committee might want to add something to those statements for clarification. After much discussion, it was decided to eliminate/strike the sentences and approve the minutes without Angel Garcia-Ablanque's question or answer.

MOTION: A motion was made to approve the November 16, 2012, minutes without inclusion of Angel Garcia-Ablanque's question and answer. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Status of Reappointments to PBTSAC:

Jeff Dunckel informed the committee that the County Executive's Office has submitted the requests for reappointment of Cpt. Thomas Didone, Colleen Mitchell, and Steve Friedman to the County Council for approval. Ben Fulton indicated that the Council had approved them. [**Editor's Note:** Arthur Holmes, Jr., is still waiting for reappointment and John Hall is also awaiting confirmation as the municipalities' representative.]

Aneysha Mookerjee was appointed as the new SHA Assistant District Engineer for Montgomery County. She will be at the January meeting; the SHA District Engineer, Brian Young, has indicated her name will be submitted as the replacement for Peter Moe.

Annual Report:

Colleen Mitchell provided a draft copy of the 2012 Annual Report for the committee's review and comments.

2. Follow-up: Pedestrian Safety and Needs of Disabled:

Issues Identified at September Meeting:

Chairman Mack said that this is a continuation of the subject brought up at the September meeting that needs to be addressed. There were a number of issues and concerns relative to pedestrian safety for the disabled that were presented at the September meeting by a number of disabled individuals. Those individuals were invited to come back but are not in attendance this evening.

Jeff Dunckel talked about the issues discussed in that meeting and the letter (email) the committee received the day after the meeting from Charles Crawford that talked in great detail about various issues/concerns he wanted known to the committee. The Committee discussed how to best consider the issues raised. A number of the of issues/concerns were already being handled or were already included in agency standards. MCDOT tried to put the issues raised into four categories:

1. New issues – none of which have been assigned to anyone or agency or addressed to date. (NEED TO FOCUS ON THESE ISSUES)
2. Issues that were part of existing programs that are already being addressed
3. Issues that should be directed to specific agencies for attention (i.e. MC311); and issues with facilities – ADA accessibility (DGS)
4. Informational items - to assist the county in considering future designs and programs.

Chairman Mack noted that we have in attendance representatives from Prince Georges County Police Department – Lt. Doug Murray, and Lt. Joseph Butler, Takoma Park Police Department, who were invited to participate and provide input to this discussion of these pedestrian issues relative to disabled individuals in Prince George's County.

David Sharp discussed his concerns regarding reporting statistics on disabled pedestrian accidents –there is no way to collect this data under the current reporting system. Analysis of bicycle accident statistics is also not available.

There was discussion about the police's inability to query or to capture data relative to disabled pedestrian incidents/fatalities, bicyclists' incidents, collision reports, etc. Narratives in accident reports are currently not searchable in the database (but are recorded in reports manually.) David Sharp also talked about accidents involving the disabled being rare but talked about people in wheelchairs being in jeopardy when crossing the street or encountering bicycles, or even going through parking lots. David Sharp talked about the need for the visually impaired to be able to identify a bus stop.

Colleen Mitchell discussed that some of these types of issues are addressed in the DC Pedestrian Master Plan and wanted to know if Montgomery County addressed these items in their Pedestrian Master Plan – is there a plan? How old is it? Jeff said we do have a ADA Transition Plan that was done back in 1990. Colleen discussed that there are newer regulations and codes in effect covering pedestrian safety construction. Jeff said there is no pedestrian master plan but there is Pedestrian Safety Initiative with seven strategies that we are implementing. Fred Lees said that there are standards covered by the codes but nothing that pulls it all together. The road code was updated and approved and is currently in effect.

Colleen Mitchell suggested taking the list of issues and putting them into “buckets” of related items – determine what key issues need to be addressed. Define issues that would assist the disabled community and all pedestrians, then research and work toward developing recommendations/resolutions for improvements. She suggested conferring with David Sharp - - ask him to look at the list and recommend where there are places where that need improvement. Colleen felt that the Committee needs more information about the status before making motions and recommendations.

Angel Garcia-Ablanque discussed State Highway making roads ADA compliant. What are the guidelines the State is using relative to ADA compliance? What is the standard? Where did standard come from? We have no way of knowing if they are using a standard that applies to a wheel chair or hearing impaired, etc. He felt these things may have already been dealt with before.

Michael Subin suggested giving list to Betsy Luecking (MCDHS) to research the list and information. Chairman Mack: What do WE do with this list? What are items WE should be looking at?

Chairman Mack's comment: Committee's role is to give advice and recommendations to Council and County Executive. Discussion ensued about how this should be handled and it was recommended that the list be referred back to DOT and associated agencies and have them handle/research that will eventually lead to development of master plan.

Items of importance should be prioritized – put into categories to be addressed: construction related issues: signals and signal buttons, crosswalks, parking lots (should have codes), construction of crosswalks, bus stops, rules/regulations Colleen volunteered to summarize (edit) the list in order of importance/most concern offline.

Jeff proposed that the committee would “bucket” them, categorize and research them (i.e., signals, crosswalks, and parking lots, construction, and bus stops.) There was discussion regarding what agencies are already handling/or not handling these items and what existing codes/regulations there are that cover the items on the above list. Look at list to see if there are existing codes and regulations that exist, i.e., construction. Follow up with agencies on codes/regulations and whether they are being monitored.

Michael Subin talked about the improbability of a Pedestrian Master Plan ever being approved by Council. Jeff Dunckel agreed with Mike that rather than deferring everything to a Master Plan, we should work with implementing agencies to tackle the problems (i.e., construction impeding access to disabled – SHA and DPS) – and discuss specific issues at committee sessions (i.e., signals). Colleen said these need to be actual work sessions and not a presentation. Michael Subin emphasized that we make sure complaints/issues are handled by the agencies - - make it a priority for them. Council and the Executive want to know if something is not being done.

Jeff Dunckel recapped: Put list into buckets (categories)...present this to committee...schedule for committee meetings over the coming year these “bucket sessions” – one bucket topic per meeting...first submit questions to other agencies handling the bucket topics, using their answers as input...ask about codes, look at codes and standards, best practices, determine from there where the committee should go. Then, the committee may determine actions that may or may not be required.

We would need to take on just one category: David selected signals/crosswalks as the first one(s) to handle. Tom Pogue recommended we focus on CROSSWALKS. Presentation/Work Session on Crosswalks to be held in March.

David Sharp is requested to go back to those individuals that attended the September meeting and let them know what our intentions are and how the committee is going to proceed.

3. New Business/Committee Comments:

Chairman Mack then went to Item 3 on the Agenda – for the January 3 Meeting relative to Bicycle Issues...Discussion will be: Rules that transcend and differ in various counties and municipalities and over County lines.

Next meeting will be held on January 3, 2012.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:41 p.m.